



Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC) Feedback Loop

February 7, 2023

Recommendations, Input and Decisions Made, Status Updates

Follow Up Items from December 6

DCYF Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice (ORESJ) Update

In response to questions from Members regarding recent changes in staffing within the Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice (ORESJ), please see an update from DCYF Chief of Staff Frank Ordway below:

Dear ELAC Members,

Thank you for sharing your interest and questions regarding the recent transitions in staffing within ORESJ. I am happy to share some updates on the current status of this work and outline our next steps for ORESJ and DCYF as a whole.

I want to start by acknowledging the strong work of the initial ORESJ team. Their contributions have been incredibly valuable to the agency and highlight how critical this work is. We recognize that a fully staffed and supported ORESJ is necessary in order for this work to continue, and that DCYF is committed to not only continuing this work, but expanding it throughout the Agency. This has been a top priority for DCYF's Leadership Table, and while this is ongoing, we have some updates to share.

- The ORESJ team is growing. We recently hired three Administrators and a Program Specialist, with plans to expand the team to six, and additional future investments for increased FTEs in the office. DCYF will have the largest office of its kind in the State, all self-funded.
- ORESJ will be represented at the Leadership Table. DCYF will be the first Cabinet Agency to do so. The exact format of this is in development.

In addition to supporting a successful transition for ORESJ, The Leadership Table is also reviewing DCYF's internal practices to develop strategies to promote racial equity and eliminate disparities throughout the Agency. With these goals in mind, DCYF leadership is committed to addressing the following during the first quarter:

- Finalizing the structure of the ORESJ team, including the form of its representation at the Leadership Table and position in the organization chart.
- Implementing RESJ Training requirements for our 5,000 employees.
- Outcome measures and a reporting frequency for the RESJ page in our strategic plan.
- Establishing consistent agency response to employee behavior that is inconsistent with our values and standards.

I look forward to continued partnership and collaboration as we work towards our shared goal of eliminating racial disproportionalities and advancing racial equity throughout DCYF and improving outcomes for the children and families of Washington State.

Sincerely,

Frank Ordway



Fair Start for Kids Act (FSKA) Evaluation and Data Update

- Regarding the removal and expulsion by race and ethnicity, after you measure this data, will there be any analysis as to why? So that not only do we measure yes this occurred, but why did it occur? Is finding out why a part of the process?
 - (Response) We worked with Gabe Ortiz in DCYF and he sent me our current data on child care expulsions. After doing a quick review, we concluded that most of the reasons providers list for expulsions are due to violent or aggressive behavior against other children. To supplement this result, we will also be looking into provider training and adequate staffing, and the extent to which they are available.
 - (Response) We also reached out to Ryan Guzman at OSPI and we are working together to gather statewide data on children with IEPs. As a start, Ryan provided a link for the count of children who are in need of inclusive services. We hope this helps with provider training system building/advocacy.
<https://www.k12.wa.us/student-success/special-education/special-education-data-collection/special-education-data-collection-summaries#dex-accordion-item>

New Training Site for Providers

- Is this different from: <https://dcyftraining.com/>?
 - DCYF's New Training Site will replace the current online training portal, DCYFtraining.com.
- Does this mean MERIT will be going away completely? If so, where do our MERIT certs and training records go?
 - No, MERIT is not going away. DCYF's New Training Site has similar features to MERIT, for instance the ability to search for training. You will no longer search for trainings in MERIT, instead you will use the new training site to search for and register for community-based and online (LMS) trainings. MERIT will still be used to record your staff qualifications. There is plenty of time still to create supports, communication and prepare the provider community and all users on the functions of each platform.
- Will Tribes/Tribal providers have access?
 - Yes, Tribes/Tribal providers will have access to the new training site.
- Mention was made of having to go to many training sites. What all is going to be incorporated into this new training site?
 - DCYF's New Training Site will be a place for training, and apply to become a state-approved trainer. This is replacing the DCYFtraining.com site, so there will not be an increased number of platforms to use.
 - Child Care Providers: will be able to find training for in-service hours AND complete online trainings on DCYF's New Training Site when it launches later in, 2023.
 - Trainers: will access the new training site to list training, track completions, manage rosters, and connect to their training organization. It is also be where new trainers will apply to become state-approved trainers.
 - Training Organizations: will be able to share their curricula with DCYF, and manage their state-approved trainers in the new training site.
- We need transparency in the training and how educators can navigate the site. Many providers use their phones and not computers/laptops so will it be easy for them to access?
 - DCYF's New Training Site will have features to create a more user-friendly site, including for mobile devices. There is plenty of time still to create supports, communication and prepare the provider community and all users on the functions of the new training site
- How will Merit be impacted? Will MERIT data transfer to this new program?
 - MERIT will still exist. We are still exploring what data will be transferred.



- What about training reimbursement application process? Will this be on this website or Merit?
 - The training reimbursement process will continue to be in MERIT.
- As an employer, having access to employees training records is important. Will this be a feature? Monitoring requirements.
 - Yes, employers can now and will still be able to monitor employee training records in MERIT.
- Will providers have to track on WA Compass, MERIT and this training portal?
 - The primary difference for providers is that the DCYFtraining.org site will not be where they go for training, instead they will go to a new URL for the new training site. DCYF will continue to use these systems as they are currently in place. The only difference will be that you can find all your required training in one place.
- ECEAP admin. has more access to training and other data. Expansion of this and elimination of silos would be great. Can you do that?
 - This suggestion has been noted and we are beginning to learn more about what is possible in this area.
- Provide compensation for employees and providers to provide feedback for the site.
 - DCYF is working on a mechanism to do this for child care providers.
- Where will licensing orientation go once the new training site is up and running if the new training site doesn't include any of the Licensing Process/trainings?
 - The licensing orientation currently lives in the DCYFtraining.org site, so it will be moving along with all other content to the new training site.
- Would love to explore the addition of the Licensing Process into the new training site. Licensing Online Orientation is on the current DCYF training site so curious where that will go?
 - The licensing orientation currently lives in the DCYFtraining.org site, so it will be moving along with all other content to the new training site.
- Make sure that all trainings are eligible for all STATE program Types: credit no matter if you are regular Childcare, ECEAP or HeadStart, etc.
 - This question is about what is and isn't considered training that is eligible for STARS hours. Noted for future policy considerations, but a reminder that this process will not amend any training policy or requirements, only the platform in which providers access their training.
- It'd be nice if agencies/organizations could also use this training site to host their own organization-specific trainings.
 - This suggestion has been noted and we can learn more about the possibilities to open up access for other training organizations to have more functions in the training site.